

## Rockingham



In the summer of 2001, Rockingham County was selected by the North Carolina Department of Commerce as one of 10 communities to participate in its 21st Century Communities program. Several large-scale, countywide initiatives had been completed previously and helped to achieve a sense of direction and consensus on economic development issues within the county.

Several major issues and strategic directions emerged through the 21st Century Community assessment process and related studies:

- Job Creation/Retention/Diversification
- Workforce Development
- Infrastructure
- Unity and Communication
- Appearance and Image



Since being part of the 21st Century program, several accomplishments can be listed:

- CDBG Concentrated Needs grants totaling \$700,000 have been secured.
- At the August 2002 Small Cities CDBG conference, the City of Eden's Island Mill project was named Best Rehabilitation Project of the CDBG Program.

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## Rutherford



Rutherford County is a first-round 21st Century Communities participant. At the time of its selection, Rutherford County was in the initial stages of a strategic planning effort financed through private contributions. Rather than creating an additional strategic planning document, the county decided to utilize the 21st Century Communities program in a supporting role.

The county has had significant success in addressing several of the identified major issues.

- Local government officials now meet quarterly to discuss areas of mutual concern and explore opportunities for greater cooperation.
- A comprehensive land use plan has recently been prepared and the county has employed its first full-time planner.
- The county has established a funding mechanism to finance water extensions to outlying areas. Forest City worked in conjunction with the Broad River Water Authority to construct two interconnects between the water systems to provide a means of sharing water in drought situations.